

Sec. III — ASSESSMENT

Comparison of Assessments: Screening, Diagnostic, and Formative Assessment

Element/Criteria	Screening	Diagnostic	Formative
Purpose	Identifies high and low performing students whose needs are not being met	Helps to determine why the academic and/or behavioral needs are occurring Identifies what the student needs to learn	Identifies if students are making progress Identifies if instruction needs adjustment
Questions Answered	Which students are in need of additional assessment? How are students responding to core instruction?	Why is the need occurring? What does the student need to learn?	Are the students making progress compared to self, peers, and standard? Is an instructional change needed?
Data Use	Teachers obtain the data Teachers use the data to determine students who need differentiated instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources	Teachers obtain the data Teachers use the data to differentiate instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources	Teachers obtain the data Teachers use the data to differentiate instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources
Student Participation	An entire classroom/grade/school/district, using either individual or group format	Students who exceed or fall below the learning expectations/standards	All students in core, supplemental and intensive instruction
Professional/Ethical Standards	The test scores distinguish the proficiency levels of students. The test identifies which and how many students differ from the standard Items are sufficient to accurately reflect changes in student performance Sources of bias have been eliminated People are adequately trained to administer, score, and interpret the test results	Teacher observations, interviews, review of permanent products, or other already existing information are included The results provide sufficient information to understand what skills need to be taught, as well as to identify alternative curricular materials or instructional strategies There is evidence that an item analysis could be appropriately used with a given diagnostic measure People are adequately trained to administer, score, and interpret the test results	Items are sufficient to accurately reflect changes in student performance There is evidence that parallel forms measure the same construct Sources of bias have been eliminated People are adequately trained to administer, score, and interpret the test results

Comparison of Assessments: Screening, Diagnostic, and Formative Assessment cont.			
Element/Criteria	Screening	Diagnostic	Formative
Alignment	There is an explicit connection between the screening measure and district standards, benchmarks, and instruction	There is an explicit connection between the diagnostic assessment and district standards, benchmarks, and instruction	There is an explicit connection between formative assessment and district standards, benchmarks, and instruction
Test Administration	Is administered according to screening direction	Typically given individually. Assessment can take as long as is needed to help understand the academic and/or behavioral need	Assessment can take as long as needed to fully assess the performance of the student
Frequency of Administration	Delivered by the school district, but recommended three times per year, the first one being near the start of the school year	Data are gathered when additional information is necessary to understand the student's need	Administration of formative assessment is completed as frequently as the measure can be used to show movement. e.g., every week/two weeks
Test Scoring	Results in a score that can be compared to a criterion or norm	Results in a qualitative assessment of why the curricular need is occurring Results indicate what the student needs to learn	Results in scores used to judge progress against self as well as peers and expected standard Results in scores that direct the need for instructional change
Test Interpretation	Tests are scored and results returned to teachers within a timely fashion, e.g., 2 weeks	Assessment is interpreted within a timely fashion, e.g., one week of administration or discussion	Assessment is interpreted within a timely fashion, e.g., same day interpretation Apply the decision rule that uses multiple data points The results lead to decisions about continuing or changing the instruction
System Structures	Data are used to align resources and professional development There is faculty buy-in to the screening There is administrative support for screening of student progress	Data are used to align resources and professional development There is faculty buy-in to the diagnostic assessment There is administrative support for diagnostic assessment of student progress	Data are used to align resources and professional development There is faculty buy-in to the diagnostic assessment There is administrative support for formative assessment of student progress

Screening Assessments

A **Screening Assessment**, as part of district/school support system:

Screening is...	Screening is not...
administered to an entire classroom/grade/school/district, using either individual or group format.	administered to an isolated group.
used to inform instruction.	program placement or tracking.
an indicator that there is a potential problem in need of further investigation.	diagnostic - intended to tell you what the problem is
an answer to the question, "Which and how many students are potentially in need of additional support?"	does not answer the question, "What program does the student need?"
quantitative (gives a number for a score).	qualitative (anecdotal).
one piece of information required to determine additional instructional needs.	intended to be used as a sole indicator to identify students as candidates for any program, such as Title I, Special Education, Gifted and Talented, or English as a Second Language.
cost effective in terms of teacher time, student time, and dollar cost of the test and scoring.	expensive or labor intensive.
administered, scored, and interpreted in a consistent manner.	administered, scored, and interpreted randomly or subjectively.
relevant for Pre-K through 12 th grades aligned with instruction, standards, and benchmarks.	limited for use in primary grades.
a sampling of one point in time.	arbitrarily selected.
a sample of a skill.	intended to monitor individual progress.
capable of identifying students who exceed or fall below the learning expectations/standards.	intended to completely measure every skill.
results in an action or decision: information must be used.	used unless there are specific cut-off points.
easily administered, scored, and interpreted.	used for accountability purposes only.
used proactively.	time consuming to administer or difficult to score, used reactively.

Screening: How can a school district judge its screening system?			
Element/Criteria	Meets	Emerging	Does Not Meet
Purpose	Identifies potential academic and/or behavioral concerns in need of additional assessment	Does not accurately and consistently identify potential academic and/or behavioral concerns	No screening exists
Questions Answered	Which students are in need of additional assessment? How are students responding to core instruction?	One of the following items exists: Which students are in need of additional assessment? How are students responding to core instruction?	No questions are answered
Data Use	<u>All</u> of the following are observed: Teachers get the data Teachers use the data to differentiate instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources	<u>Some</u> of the following are observed: Teachers get the data Teachers use the data to differentiate instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources	<u>None</u> of the following are observed: Teachers get the data Teachers use the data to differentiate instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources
Student Participation	An entire classroom/grade/school/district, using either individual or group format	Most students are included in screening	Most students are excluded from screening
Professional/Ethical Standards	Has reliability of .80 <u>All</u> of the following are observed: The test scores distinguished the proficiency levels of students. The test identifies which and how many students differ from the standard Items are sufficient to accurately reflect changes in student performance Sources of bias have been eliminated People are adequately trained to administer, score, and interpret the test results	Has reliability of .70 - .80 <u>Most</u> of the following are observed: The test scores distinguished the proficiency levels of students. The test identifies which and how many students differ from the standard Items are sufficient to accurately reflect changes in student performance Sources of bias have been eliminated People are adequately trained to administer, score, and interpret the test results	<.70 or no evidence of reliability <u>None</u> of the following are observed: The test scores distinguished the proficiency levels of students. The test identifies which and how many students differ from the standard Items are sufficient to accurately reflect changes in student performance Sources of bias have been eliminated People are adequately trained to administer, score, and interpret the test results
Alignment	There is an explicit connection between the screening measure and district standards, benchmarks, and instruction	There is an implicit, but reasonable inference that the screening measure is linked to district standards, benchmarks, and instruction	The screening measure does not align with district standards, benchmarks, and instruction

Screening: How can a school district judge its screening system, Cont.?			
Element/Criteria	Meets	Emerging	Does Not Meet
Test Administration	Administration of screening measure is according to directions	Administration of screening measure does not consistently follow the directions	Administration is not according to the directions
Frequency of Administration	Screening is completed at least once prior to or during initial stages of instruction Frequency of screening is related to the skill sequences and how the skills are changing, as well as the level of growth that students demonstrate	Is administered on an inconsistent basis either too frequent or less frequently for the change in skills or the level of growth that students demonstrate	Is administered once per year
Test Scoring	Results in a score that can be compared to a criterion or norm	Results in an “ordinal” score such as a rubric rating or percentile rank	Results in score that could be misinterpreted, like a grade equivalent score (note: test manuals should be carefully read to determine if grade equivalent interpretation is recommended by the test maker)
Test Interpretation	Tests are scored and results returned to teachers in a timely fashion (e.g., two weeks)	Tests are scored and results returned to teachers within a timely fashion (e.g., one month)	Tests results are not returned within a timely fashion (after two months) Test results are not returned
System Structures	<u>All</u> of the following are observed: Data are used to align resources and professional development There is faculty support for the screening There is administrative support for screening of student progress	<u>Most</u> of the following are observed: Data are used to align resources and professional development There is faculty support for the screening There is administrative support for screening of student progress	<u>None</u> of the following are observed: Data are used to align resources and professional development There is faculty support for the screening There is administrative support for screening of student progress

Screening: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Who will do the screening?

Generally, the classroom teacher completes the screening. The teacher has support from a variety of sources: AEA staff, paraprofessionals, community volunteers, or others trained to administer the screening.

2. What will a screening look like?

Tests will be administered to all students, sometimes individually, sometimes in groups. In some cases, published, group-administered tests will be used; in other cases, performance tasks such as gathering an actual writing sample will be used.

3. Why do screening?

Screening is part of an instructional support system, designed to align instruction to student need. Screening helps identify those students in need of additional assessment, supplemental instruction, or intensive instruction.

4. When will screening occur?

Screening can be implemented at any time of a school year. Typically, screening data are gathered prior to initial stages of instruction. It is recommended that screening should occur at the beginning of the year, with results used by teachers during that school year. It is also reasonable to look at information from tests given the prior school year if that information will help inform instruction for that same group of students.

5. How often is screening conducted?

Screening is completed at least once prior to or during initial stages of instruction. The frequency of screening is related to the skill sequences and how the skills are changing, as well as the level of growth that students demonstrate. Typically, screening occurs at a minimum of three times per year.

6. Where does screening occur?

Screening is administered in settings that were intended by the test developer. The setting would usually be a general education classroom.

Diagnostic Assessments

A **Diagnostic Assessment** test, as part of district/school support system:

Diagnostic Assessment is...	Diagnostic Assessment is not...
administered to students who exceed or fall below the learning expectations/standards on the screening.	administered to an entire class/grade/school/district unless the entire grade performs either extremely well or extremely poorly on the screening measure.
intended to tell what the need is and why it is occurring.	intended to be a brief indicator of an academic area or to be used to monitor progress over time.
targeted at individuals or groups of students who are identified during screening as needing further assessment.	randomly administered or subjectively scored or interpreted.
relevant for Pre-K through 12th grades.	for special education and primary grades only.
aligned with instruction, standards, and benchmarks.	screening.
more comprehensive in assessing a skill than screening or formative assessments.	intended to completely measure every skill
used in data-driven decision making.	used for accountability purposes only.
used to design instruction that results in meaningful learning.	intended to place students into programs.

Diagnostic Assessment: How can a school district judge its diagnostic assessment system?			
Element/Criteria	Meets	Emerging	Does Not Meet
Purpose	Helps to determine why the academic and/or behavioral needs are occurring AND Identifies what the student needs to learn	Helps to determine why the academic and/or behavioral needs are occurring OR Identifies what the student needs to learn	Does not help to determine why the academic and/or behavioral needs are occurring Does not identify what the student needs to learn
Questions Answered	Why is the need occurring? What does the student need to learn?	One of the following items exists: Why is the need occurring? What does the student need to learn?	No questions are answered
Data Use	<u>All</u> of the following are observed: Teachers obtain the data Teachers use the data to differentiate instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources	<u>Some</u> of the following are observed: Teachers obtain the data Teachers use the data to differentiate instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources	<u>None</u> of the following are observed: Teachers obtain the data Teachers use the data to differentiate instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources
Student Participation	<u>All</u> students who exceed or fall below the learning expectations/standards	<u>Some</u> students who exceed or fall below the learning expectations/standards	<u>None</u> of the students who exceed or fall below the learning expectations/standards
Professional/Ethical Standards	<u>All</u> of the following are observed: Teacher observations, interviews, review of permanent products, or other already existing information are included The results provide sufficient information to understand what skills need to be taught, as well as to identify alternative curricular materials or instructional strategies There is evidence that an item analysis could be appropriately used with a given diagnostic measure	<u>Some</u> of the following are observed: Teacher observations, interviews, review of permanent products, or other already existing information are included The results provide sufficient information to understand what skills need to be taught, as well as to identify alternative curricular materials or instructional strategies There is evidence that an item analysis could be appropriately used with a given diagnostic measure	<u>None</u> of the following are observed: Teacher observations, interviews, review of permanent products, or other already existing information are included The results provide sufficient information to understand what skills need to be taught, as well as to identify alternative curricular materials or instructional strategies There is evidence that an item analysis could be appropriately used with a given diagnostic measure

Diagnostic Assessment: How can a school district judge its diagnostic assessment system?			
Element/Criteria	Meets	Emerging	Does Not Meet
Alignment	There is an explicit connection between the diagnostic assessment and district standards, benchmarks, and instruction	There is an implicit, but reasonable inference that the diagnostic assessment is linked to district standards, benchmarks, and instruction	The diagnostic assessment does not align with district standards, benchmarks, and instruction
Test Administration	Administration of assessment is according to directions	Administration of assessment does not consistently follow the directions	Administration is not according to the directions
Frequency of Administration	Data are gathered when additional information is necessary to understand the student's need	Data are gathered haphazardly when additional information is necessary to understand the student's need	Data are not gathered when additional information is necessary to understand the student's need
Test Scoring	Results in a qualitative assessment of why the curricular need is occurring Results indicate what the student needs to learn	One of the following exists: Results in a qualitative assessment of why the curricular need is occurring Results indicate what the student needs to learn	Does not result in a qualitative assessment of why the curricular need is occurring Results do not indicate what the student needs to learn
Test Interpretation	Tests are scored and results returned to teachers in a timely fashion (e.g., one week)	Tests are scored and results returned to teachers in a timely fashion (e.g., two weeks or more)	Tests are scored and results are not returned within a timely fashion (after two months) Test results are not returned
System Structures	<u>All</u> of the following are observed: Data are used to align resources and professional development There is faculty support for the screening There is administrative support for screening of student progress	<u>Most</u> of the following are observed: Data are used to align resources and professional development There is faculty support for the screening There is administrative support for screening of student progress	<u>None</u> of the following are observed: Data are used to align resources and professional development There is faculty support for the screening There is administrative support for screening of student progress

Diagnostic Assessment: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Who will do the diagnostic assessment?

A school district decides who will do diagnostic assessment. Generally, the classroom teacher would be considered first to complete the diagnostic assessment. The teacher has support from a variety of sources, such as AEA staff, paraprofessionals, and community volunteers, trained to administer the tests that are part of the diagnostic assessment.

2. What will diagnostic assessment look like?

Diagnostic assessment will involve interviews, observations, and a review of permanent product to understand the nature of students' academic or behavioral needs. Specific tests to determine a student's instructional needs may be administered. Occasionally, teacher-made tests may be used diagnostically or an item analysis is performed with published tests.

3. Why do diagnostic assessment?

Diagnostic assessment is part of an instructional support system, designed to align instruction to student need. Diagnostic assessment helps identify what strategies to use with students that could be provided via supplemental instruction or intensive instruction.

4. When will diagnostic assessment occur?

Diagnostic assessment is completed after the initial screening for those students who exceed or fall below the learning expectations/standard. Ongoing diagnostic assessment also occurs during formative assessment.

5. How often is diagnostic assessment completed?

Diagnostic assessment is conducted whenever a student is not making the kind of growth needed to meet his or her goal or when they exceed or fall below the learning expectations/standards. Diagnostic assessment exists within a school improvement model in which teachers are monitoring student performance and adjusting instruction continually over the course of an academic year.

6. Where does diagnostic assessment occur?

Diagnostic assessment does not occur in a specific place. It is an aggregate of information from home and school. Diagnostic assessment occurs through an examination of instructional, curricular, environmental, and learner variables, as well as through record reviews, interviews, observations, and tests, with the explicit intent of trying to understand and target the needs of the individual student.

Formative Assessments

A **Formative Assessment** test/assessment, as part of a district/school support system:

Formative Assessment is...	Formative Assessment is not...
administered at least 3 times for students receiving core instruction, at least monthly for students receiving supplemental instruction, and at least weekly for students receiving intensive instruction.	administered haphazardly. teacher referral for program placement.
intended to inform school personnel if student(s) are responding to instruction.	intended to categorize a student.
brief to administer, score, and put on a graph, chart or log.	difficult for teachers to understand.
more individually tailored.	randomly administered or subjectively scored or interpreted.
relevant for all Pre-K through 12th grade learners.	for special education and primary grades only.
aligned with instruction, standards, and benchmarks.	unrelated to district standards and benchmarks.
more comprehensive in assessing a specific skill.	intended to completely measure every skill.
is used to make a decision about whether an instructional plan needs to be changed or if the plan should continue.	used for accountability purposes only.
used proactively to design instruction that results in meaningful learning in a fluid manner of providing students the support they need.	used reactively to place students into programs without focus on fluidity in the system.

Formative Assessment: How can a school district judge its formative assessment system?			
Element/Criteria	Meets	Emerging	Does Not Meet
Purpose	Identifies if students are making progress Identifies if instruction needs adjustment	One of the following items exists: Identifies if students are making progress Identifies if instruction needs adjustment	Does not identify if students are making progress Does not identify if instruction needs adjustment
Questions Answered	Are the students making progress compared to self, peers, and standard? Is an instructional change needed?	One of the following items exists: Are the students making progress compared to self, peers, and standard? Is an instructional change needed?	No questions are answered
Data Use	<u>All</u> of the following are observed: Teachers obtain the data Teachers use the data to differentiate instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources	<u>Some</u> of the following are observed: Teachers obtain the data Teachers use the data to differentiate instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources	<u>None</u> of the following are observed: Teachers obtain the data Teachers use the data to differentiate instruction District has expectation that all teachers use data to align instructional resources
Student Participation	<u>All</u> students in supplemental and intensive instruction	<u>Some</u> of the students in supplemental and intensive instruction	<u>None</u> of the students in supplemental and intensive instruction
Professional/ Ethical Standards	Items are sufficient to accurately reflect changes in student performance There is evidence that parallel forms measure the same construct Sources of bias have been eliminated People are adequately trained to administer, score, and interpret the test results	One to three of the following items exist: Items are sufficient to accurately reflect changes in student performance There is evidence that parallel forms measure the same construct Sources of bias have been eliminated People are adequately trained to administer, score, and interpret the test results	Items are not sufficient to accurately reflect changes in student performance There is no evidence that parallel forms measure the same construct Sources of bias have not been eliminated People are not adequately trained to administer, score, and interpret the test results

Formative Assessment: How can a school district judge its formative assessment system?			
Element/Criteria	Meets	Emerging	Does Not Meet
Alignment	There is an explicit connection between formative assessment and district standards, benchmarks, and instruction	There is an implicit, but reasonable inference that the formative assessment is linked to district standards, benchmarks, and instruction	The formative assessment does not align with district standards, benchmarks, and instruction
Test Administration	Administration of formative assessment is done according to directions	Administration of formative assessment is not consistent with the directions	Administration is not done or does not follow directions
Frequency of Administration	Administration of formative assessment is completed frequently and consistently	Formative assessment occurs inconsistently	No formative assessment occurs
Test Scoring	Results in scores used to judge progress against self as well as peers and expected standard Results in scores that direct the need for instructional change	One of the following exists: Results in scores used to judge progress against self as well as peers and expected standard Results in scores that direct the need for instructional change	Does not result in a qualitative assessment of why the curricular need is occurring Results do not indicate what the student needs to learn
Test Interpretation	All of the following are observed: Same day interpretation Apply the decision rule that uses multiple data points The results lead to decisions about continuing, discontinuing, or changing the instruction	<u>Some</u> of the following are observed: Same day interpretation Apply the decision rule that uses multiple data points The results lead to decisions about continuing, discontinuing, or changing the instruction	<u>None</u> of the following are observed: Same day interpretation Apply the decision rule that uses multiple data points The results lead to decisions about continuing, discontinuing, or changing the instruction
System Structures	<u>All</u> of the following are observed: Data are used to align resources and professional development The faculty consistently supports the collection and use of formative assessment data There is administrative support for formative assessment of student progress	<u>Some</u> of the following are observed: Data are used to align resources and professional development The faculty consistently supports the collection and use of formative assessment data There is administrative support for formative assessment of student progress	<u>None</u> of the following are observed: Data are used to align resources and professional development The faculty consistently support the collection and use of formative assessment data There is administrative support for formative assessment of student progress

Formative assessment: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Who will do the formative assessment?

A school district decides who will collect the data. Generally, the classroom teacher completes the formative assessment. However, the formative assessment may be performed by other personnel such as AEA staff, paraprofessionals, and community volunteers who are sufficiently trained to administer such assessments.

2. What will formative assessment look like?

Formative assessment involves giving a skills assessment or probe, or using a rubric to rate student performance. Results are put on a graph, table, or log. The instruction and curriculum for students whose performance falls below the goal line four times in a row are examined to determine if modifications in instruction or curriculum are needed to enhance learning.

3. Why do formative assessment?

Formative assessment is part of an instructional support system, designed to align instruction to student need. Formative assessment helps identify when strategies selected are effective or not effective.

4. When will formative assessment occur?

Formative assessment occurs after the instructional needs have been identified and supports have been put in place to improve student performance, at either the group or individual level.

5. How often is formative assessment completed?

Formative assessments are completed as frequently as the measure can be used to show movement. e.g. every week / two weeks.

It is assumed that formative assessment exists in a school improvement model in which teachers are monitoring student performance and adjusting instruction continually over the course of an academic year.

6. How does formative assessment occur?

Formative assessment happens either as part of regular instruction or as a brief assessment (probe) completed sometime during the instructional period. Formative assessment most commonly occurs in one of two ways. First, a permanent product generated from regular assignments can be used as a monitoring tool. Second, a skills assessment or probe, representative of the global skill being taught, is used to monitor performance. For behavioral goals, frequency counts of behavior or teacher observation can be used.